

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

What is claimed is:

1.-20. (Canceled)

21. (Currently Amended) A method for transferring at least one of a media file and associated usage rights data from a first user unit to a second user unit, comprising the steps of:

~~wherein identifying the at least one of a media file is identifiable~~ by a central interface unit ~~[[and]] wherein the media file~~ includes at least one component of image data, audio data, and video data, ~~the method comprising the steps of:~~

transferring the at least one of the media file and the associated usage rights data directly from the first user unit to the second user unit via a communication link between the first and second user units;

limiting access by the first user unit to the media file;

providing access to the second user unit to the media file;

coupling at least one of the first and second user units over a communications network to the central interface unit; ~~[[and]]~~

logging, at the central interface unit, the transfer of at least one of the media file and its associated usage rights data to the second user unit;

generating an acknowledgment receipt by the second user unit after receipt of the media file; and

transferring the acknowledgment receipt from the second user unit to the first user unit after the media file is transferred from the first user unit to the second user unit.

22. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 21, further comprising the step of retrieving, by~~ A method for transferring at least one of a media file and associated usage rights data from a first user unit to a second user unit, comprising the steps of:

Identifying the at least one of the media file by a central interface unit, wherein the at least one of a media file includes at least one component of image data, audio data, and video data;

coupling at least one of the first and second user units over a communications network to the central interface unit;

transferring at least one of the media file and the associated usage rights data from the first user unit to central interface unit and then to the second user unit;

limiting access by the first user unit to the media file;

providing access to the second user unit to the media file;

logging, at the central interface unit, the transfer, wherein the second unit[[,]] retrieves either the media file or the associated usage rights data, ~~not transferred from the first user unit to the second user unit~~ directly from the central interface unit;

generating an acknowledgment receipt by the second user unit after receipt of the media file; and

transferring the acknowledgment receipt from the second user unit to the first user unit after the media file is transferred from the first user unit to the second user unit.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the second user unit has a second media file with associated usage rights data, the method further comprising the steps of:

transferring at least one of the second media file and its associated usage rights data from the second user unit to the first user unit;

limiting access by the second user unit to the second media file;

providing access to the first user unit to the second media file;

wherein the logging step further comprises the step of logging the transfer of at least one of the second media file and its associated usage rights data from the second user unit to the first user unit.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein the transfer of at least one of the first media file and its associated usage rights data to the second user unit is part of a swap transaction conditioned upon the transfer of at least one of the second media file and its associated usage rights data to the first user unit.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein the second user unit transfers more than one media file to the first unit as part of a swap transaction.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24, further comprising the step of generating a dummy media file substituting at least one of the second media file and its associated usage rights data to satisfy the swap transaction conditions.

27. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 21, wherein the first and second user unit each has a storage unit, an input buffer and an output buffer, the method further comprising the steps of:

transferring the media file to be transferred from the storage unit of the first user unit, ~~[[()]]~~a transferring user unit, ~~[[()]]~~ to the associated output buffer; and

transferring the media file to be transferred from the output buffer of the transferring user unit to the input buffer of the second user unit, ~~[[()]]~~a receiving user unit ~~[[()]]~~.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, wherein the logging step additionally comprises at least one of:

updating a transfer log associated with the transferring user unit to reflect the removal of the media file; and

updating a transfer log associated with the receiving user unit to reflect the addition of the transferred media file.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, further comprising the steps of:

polling a digital rights management system within the central interface unit by the transferring user unit; and

receiving a command or message from the digital rights management system by the transferring user unit to limit access by the transferring user unit to the transferred media file.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, further comprising the steps of:

polling a digital rights management system within the central interface unit by the receiving user unit; and

receiving a command or message from the digital rights management system by the receiving user unit to grant to the receiving user unit access to the received media file.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, further comprising the step of preventing access to a transferred media file by a receiving user if the digital rights management system has associated the transferred media file with a third user unit.

32. (Previously Presented) The method claim 27, further comprising the step of cryptographically associating each transferred digital media file with a receiving user unit.

33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, further comprising the step of transferring the transferred media file from the receiving user unit back to the transferring unit if the transfer is not ratified.

34. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, further comprising the steps of:

providing a history log for integration into each media file that identifies at least one of previous owners and transfers of the media file; and

synchronizing the media file history log with the logged transfers stored within the central interface unit.

35. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, further comprising the step of determining whether the media file is transferred with one or more usage restrictions.

36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, further comprising the step of transferring the transferred media file from the receiving user unit back to the transferring user unit after a predetermined usage restriction condition associated with the transferred media file has been met.

37. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, further comprising the step of transferring the transferred media file from the receiving user unit back to the transferring user unit after a predetermined amount of time has expired, or after the receiving user unit has accessed the transferred media file greater than or equal to a predetermined number of occurrences, or if the transfer has not been ratified by the central interface unit, or if the transfer is subsequently cancelled, or if the transfer is not successful.

38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, further comprising the step of periodically communicating, by the central interface unit, with individual user

units, to synchronize at least one of the media files and the associated usage rights data, if any, stored within each user unit with one or more databases within the central interface unit.

39. (Canceled)

40. (Currently Amended) A computer program product embodied on a computer readable medium loaded into a memory and executed by a processor, comprising:

~~a computer usable medium having computer readable code embodied therein~~ portions for transferring at least one of a media file or associated usage rights data from a first user unit to a second user unit wherein the media file is identifiable by a central interface unit and includes at least one component of image data, audio data, and video data, ~~the computer code product comprising:~~

~~computer readable program code portions for transferring at least one of the media file and the associated usage rights data from the first user unit to the second user unit over a communication link between the first and second user units;~~

~~computer readable program code portions for limiting access by the first user unit to the media file;~~

~~computer readable program code portions for providing access to the second user unit to the media file;~~

~~computer readable program code portions for coupling at least one of the first and second user units over a communications network to the central interface unit;~~
[[and]]

~~computer readable program code portions for logging, at the central interface unit, the transfer of the media file to the second user unit[.];~~

computer code portions for generating an acknowledgment receipt by the second user unit after receipt of the media file; and

computer code portions for transferring the acknowledgment receipt from the second user unit to the first user unit after the media file is transferred from the first user unit to the second user unit.

41. (Canceled)

42. (Currently Amended) A system₁ comprising:

a computer processor and a memory coupled to the processor, where the memory is encoded with one or more programs ~~that is~~ configured to ~~perform a method for transferring~~ transfer at least one of a media file and associated usage rights data from a first user unit to a second user unit, wherein the media file is identifiable by a central interface unit and includes at least one component of image data, audio data, and video data, ~~the method~~ the system further comprising ~~the steps of:~~

means for transferring at least one of the media file and the associated usage rights data directly from the first user unit to the second user unit over a direct communication link between the first and second user units;

means for limiting access by the first user unit to the media file;

means for providing access to the second user unit to the media file;

means for coupling at least one of the first and second user units over a communications network to the central interface unit; [[and]]

means for logging, at the central interface unit, the transfer of at least one of the media file and its associated usage rights data to the second user unit[[.]];

means for generating an acknowledgment receipt by the second user unit after receipt of the media file; and

means for transferring the acknowledgment receipt from the second user unit to the first user unit after the media file is transferred from the first user unit to the second user unit.

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